

A
S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT

REHOBOTH, (in the Province of MASSACHU-
SETTS-BAY) MAY 14, 1766;

AT THE

ORDINATION

OF THE REVEREND

Mr. EPHRAIM HYDE,

Pastor of the first Church in that Town:

By ABEL STILES, *M. A.*

And Pastor of the first Church in WOODSTOCK.

Thou GOD, and mortal! thence more GOD to man!
Man's theme eternal! man's eternal theme!
Who disembosom'd from the Father, bows
The heav'n of heav'ns, to kiss the distant earth!
Takes his delights among the sons of men.
Then farewell night! of darknefs now no more:
Joy breaks; shines; triumphs; 'tis eternal day.

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

PROVIDENCE, in NEW-ENGLAND:

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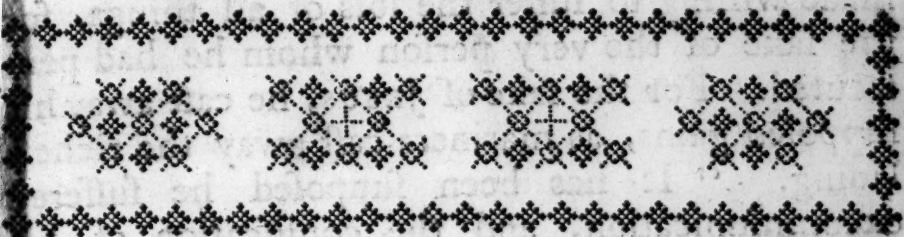
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An ORDINATION SERMON.

EPHESIANS iii. 8.

“ Unto me, who am less than the least
“ of all saints, is this grace given, that I
“ should preach among the Gentiles the
“ unsearchable riches of CHRIST.”

 HE conversion and apostleship of
St. *Paul*, duly considered, has been
thought, of itself, a demonstration
sufficient to prove christianity to be a
divine revelation.” This hath been
judiciously treated by a respectable modern writer*. Certain it is, that his conversion, and the
consequence of it, have signatures of energy so
divine, as ought to affect us, in like solemn man-
ner, as *Moses* when he saw the bush burning, but
not consumed. Behold ! and wonder at the man,
A 2 made

made willing to suffer the loss of all things, for the sake of the very person whom he had persecuted. For the sake of JESUS, he cast away his supposed gains, as mariners cast away the richest lading. "It has been supposed he suffered excommunication, and the confiscation of his goods." Enthusiasm, and the like, may carry men to some lengths of seeming self-denial, but can produce no examples worthy of comparison with that of *St. Paul*; for he not only cast away things naturally most valued, but also took in their stead, things of a quite contrary nature. He gave up not only his fortune and his friends, but also his religion, his *Judaism*, of which no man was more tenacious: These the sacrifices he made, in becoming altogether a christian. But what did he take in the room and stead of the forementioned allurements of honor and interest? Witness! the most implacable vengeance of those whom he deserted; together with that complication of perils, which you find in one of his epistles to the *Corinthians*—How signally was the arm of the LORD revealed! when *Paul* believed the divine reports! became a christian! yea, a preacher, a preacher even to the Gentiles, whom his education had taught him to have in contempt and abhorrence! The words of our text contain the sentiments of *St. Paul*, relative to his ministerial office; including his personal character as a real christian. The sentiments and terms of the text are an example of the true sublime.—When he considers what he had been, he scarcely can find words sufficiently expressive of his self-abasing apprehensions; not

enough to say, less than the least of the apostles, but less than even the least of all saints. I suppose it has been justly remarked, that the apostle, in diminution of himself, hath in the text used a new word, which, according to grammarians, is the comparative degree of the superlative, and which cannot be fully expressed in a literal translation *. But when he mentions the grace given him, and the riches of CHRIST, which he preached among the Gentiles, he seems transported with grateful admiration. And as our text shews what every gospel minister ought to be, and what he ought to do, I shall, on this occasion, attempt some description of the ministerial character; and this under the following heads, *viz.*

I. Ministers are to excel in humility.

II. They should thankfully admire the grace and favor bestowed upon them.

III. They are to preach the gospel, as containing the unsearchable riches of CHRIST.

I. Ministers of the gospel are to excel in humility. Humbleness of mind becomes all who are called to labor in the LORD's vineyard, to labor in the word and doctrine: Tho' they are not guilty of such persecuting madness, and outrageous efforts as St. *Paul* was, yet for many weighty reasons, they should, like the apostle, be cloathed, decorated and harnessed with humility; for without this, they walk shamefully naked and defenceless. If ministers are not humble, they will be high-minded, which no more becomes them, than an excellent speech

a fool, or lying lips a prince. *Solomon* never let ministers forget that solemn caveat, "not think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but think soberly."

The sentiments of the apostle in our text, should be so written upon the hearts of ministers, as to be known and read of all men. Unto *us*! is given this grace! unto *us*! who are less, &c. — Every part of the ministerial work requires the exercise of humility; not a day but calls for its improvement. Our SAVIOUR had a peculiar view to gospel ministers in that repeated speech of his, *viz.* "He that exalteth himself shall be abased; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." What more opposite to ministerial character, than a superb, supercilious, self-elating mind and manner? May the grace of the meek and lowly JESUS, deliver ministers from this diotrephetic evil, an evil hateful as *Nicholaitan* deeds. Humility stands (as it were) in the front of virtues, constituting a sober and sound mind; therefore public teachers should abound in this cardinal virtue. Motives to this are not wanting; for they come from every quarter, and meet them in every point of their ministerial sphere. The books of creation and Providence are open, in which is legible this compendious memento, — Remember ye are men! which was the striking speech of the poet *Simonides*, to the *Lacedemonian* prince. — But Revelation says more, *viz.* remember the apostle, who said, "unto me, who am less than the least," &c. It is reasonably expected, their humility should correspond to the sacredness of their of-

fice, their singular relation to him who said, "I am meek and lowly in heart," to their singular advantages and obligations to learn the lessons of lowliness. The greater and lesser lights of heaven, the sun, moon and stars, unitedly proclaim, let ministers be humble!—*Psal. viii. 3, 4.* "When I consider the heavens, the moon and the stars, what is man, that thou art mindful of him?"—In like manner should ministers humbly say, who and what are *we*, that CHRIST should make use of *us*, to shed abroad the favor of HIS knowledge; in HIS stead beseech men to be reconciled unto GOD, and be holden as stars in HIS right-hand? The several titles, descriptive of the ministerial office and employment, notify and call them to put on humility—*e. g.* Minister, ambassador, angel, star, steward, &c.—But more so the example of our Mediator, who humbled himself to dwell personally in flesh, minister to the evil and unthankful, yea, humbled himself unto the most infamous death! Add to this, the example of angels, who excel in humility, as well as in strength; for they minister to mankind, especially the heirs of salvation. Shall the Son of GOD and his angels be such examples of humility, and shall the ambassadors of this Son of GOD, be themselves like that generation!—"O how lofty are their eyes, and their eye-lids are lifted up!"

Let the minister on the one hand, consider the sacredness of his stewardship, the richness of the treasure committed to him, how much depends on his fidelity, his accountableness to the Judge of all.—But on the other hand,

the unhallowedness of his own person, as said the prophet *Isaiab*, beholding the divine glory; that he is but an earthen vessel, formed out of the clay, and soon must be remanded to the dust; that with all gifts of nature, literature and grace, he is but a fallible creature, knows but little, can effect but little; that all his lustre is borrowed; that he is dependent for his usefulness, and for his acceptance: Let these, and the like considerations, preserve him from that pride, which foregoes destruction, even the condemnation of the devil, 1 *Tim.* iii. 6.

Let the sentiments of the apostle be written on the hearts of all who minister in holy things, viz. "Who then is *Paul*? and who is *Apollos*? Neither he that planteth is any thing; nor he that watereth." With these and like sentiments, they will have neither hearts to lord it over their flocks, nor over their fellow-laborers.—With these humbling views, we behold with compassionate indignation, the catholic Luciferian harlot, and bless God that we are not blinded with her boasted, though blasphemous, infallibility. And as to the political established superiorities and subordinations of episcopal hierarchy, let us leave them all unenvied, and rejoice in our ministerial equality.—But to close this head.—Never, never, let ministerial humility, be made, as it were, a secular engine, to serve a present turn: Let not humility be formed, fashioned and directed by the weakness, or worse than weakness, of the people.—Had *Korah*, and his company, been allowed to give law to *Moses* and *Aaron*, concerning humility, what had become of their authority?—

Therefore, let not a minister of CHRIST, be guilty of pusillanimous cowardly condescension, deserving the contemptible name of voluntary humility. Shall a steward, a watchman, an overseer, an angel, &c. betray his trust, either to pacify the clamours of *Korah*, or to sooth the flatteries of *Abalom*? No.—But rather like *Job* and *Nehemiah*, let him not fear a multitude, nor be terrified with the contempt of families—Let him be known in his place. For as one says, “Angels are not so familiar with men, as to be thought on a level with them.” Nor should angels of the churches be contemptuously familiar.

II. They should thankfully admire the grace and favor bestowed upon them. I mean, upon them, as ministers. How greatly affected was the apostle in our text, with his ministerial grace and favor? Unto me is given this, even, this grace!—given with certain circumstances very stupendous and wonderful! He appears as one not able to admire sufficiently that grace by which he was made not only a christian, but also, an ambassador of CHRIST, a teacher of the very Gentiles, whom his education and long custom had taught him to contemn. This the grace for which he was so thankful; and thus he shewed himself a pattern of ministerial gratitude. Gospel ministers have peculiar motives to abound in gladness of heart, and thanksgiving to God.—What? if, in many respects, they are men of sorrow, acquainted with grief, have sorrow upon sorrow, yet, with the apostle in our text and elsewhere, they should be always rejoicing, rejoice

evermore, as well as pray without ceasing. The reasons are obvious; for 'tis grace, the rich favor of God, that qualifies, calls, improves and succeeds them. Not only former extraordinary apostles, prophets, &c. but also present ordinary pastors, teachers, &c. are so by the grace of God. By the grace of God, they are what they are, as said the apostle concerning himself. The dignity, and utility of their employment, demand some proportionable gratitude. As they have singular motives to joyfulness, so 'tis expected from them, and that with like reason—as grapes from God's ancient vineyard. Consider the ministerial character, as drawn in the New Testament, and there you will find, the most affecting, yea constraining motives to ministerial thankfulness. Qualifications for the good work of a bishop, imply more than one, three or five talents of nature, literature and grace. If wo is to that land whose king is a child! no less wo to the church whose teacher is a novice!—If 'tis terrible to have children for princes, and babes to rule over us; not less, but more so, when babes usurp the ministry, and surreptitiously take the title of CHRIST's ministers.—Therefore, how thankful should we be, when our sons are raised up prophets, and our young men *Nazarites*! More especially, the subjects of this grace and favor, should abound in thankful admiration. How great! how good the office! the work of the New Testament bishops!—they minister to the heirs of salvation.—And is not this the work of angels?—therefore to be done with a ready thankful mind. They labor in the word and doctrine, preach the gospel of the king-

dom, which was the work of one, whom angels adore. They diffuse the favour of divine knowledge in every place, and thus they are unto GOD, a sweet favour of CHRIST, 2 Cor. ii. 15.—The master they serve hath riches durable and unsearchable. Their promised reward, is an exceeding and eternal weight of glory.—This the joy set before them! *Kath hyperboleen, eis hyperboleen*, says *Blackwall*, is infinitely emphatical, and cannot be expressed by any translation.—Therefore, as the sun rejoiceth to run his race, and as the morning stars, the sons of GOD sang together, and shouted for joy, so let the stars in CHRIST's right hand rejoice, and the angels of the churches be glad.—Angels bid them welcome into the sacred vineyard, and in heart give them the right hand. "I am thy fellow-servant," said the angel to St. *John*. — 'Tis not good that humility should be alone, GOD hath (in effect) said, Joy and gladness shall be a help meet for it.—Therefore, "what GOD hath joined together, let no man put asunder."

III. They are to preach the gospel, as containing the unsearchable riches of CHRIST.—This the compendium of their work, the summary of their employment. Witness the apostle in our text. The same apostle elsewhere speaks of the gospel as a treasure, and in the text, he shews the unsearchable riches contained in this treasure, even the riches of CHRIST. The gospel informs us, that in CHRIST dwells all fulness; immense riches laid up in him, and by his liberal hand dispersed and scattered abroad, yet undiminished. Ministers are to preach, not themselves as lords;

but CHRIST JESUS, Lord of all, and rich unto all who receive him. They are to preach the riches of CHRIST, that all might hear, believe the report, and believing, might have the riches of grace and glory. They are to preach the kingdom of God, and teach those things which concern the LORD JESUS CHRIST, with all confidence. The riches, both of his deity and of his mediation, must be taught, as a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation.

I. Ministers are to preach the deity of CHRIST, his divine perfections natural and moral, his universal propriety, possession and dominion. They are to make all men (if possible) believe, that CHRIST is real God; therefore, worthy of religious adoration. They must be valiant for the truth of his universal jurisdiction; that he is God over all; therefore God blessed for ever. Men are to be taught; therefore, ministers must teach them to have in abhorrence; the *Arian* sub-deity of CHRIST, and all near approaches towards it. They must shew men, "the riches of his glorious kingdom, the honor of his superlative Majesty, that all things were created by him and for him;" therefore, as God he must have unsearchable riches of possession and dominion. Who can measure his realms,—number his armies,—or, by searching, find out his riches? The Queen of *Sheba* found the truth of what was reported concerning *Solomon*. And men must hear, that they might cordially credit the report of *Jehovah*, and JESUS of *Nazareth*, in one person, and with *Thomas*, confess our LORD and our God! Worship the mysterious IMMANUEL, God in flesh, who being

infinitely rich, became poor, that men might, through his poverty, be made rich.

2. Ministers are to preach the riches, the fulness of CHRIST's mediation. Men are to be taught (as it were) line upon line, that in him is all fulness of merit. The unfearchable riches of his mediation, should be the salt of their ministrations. With all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt, *Levit. ii. 13.*—Therefore, when ministers of the gospel *Socinianize*, they are salt which has lost its flavour, *Matt. v. 13.* Therefore, they are to be instant in season, and out of season, in preaching the perfection of his mediation; the fulness of his ministerial grace and truth. The law was by *Moses*; but grace and truth by JESUS CHRIST. They must not shun to declare the riches contained in his whole mediatorial character; the purpose and efficacy of each office; his perfect qualifications for his designation, and the conformity to it, in which he has ever been acting.—Therefore, the grand purposes of his mission cannot prove abortive, through defect either of his understanding or of his will. Men must be taught the prophetic, priestly and kingly offices of the MESSIAH.—What riches of grace are poured into his lips, to be dispersed and given to the poor, the graceless.—The unfearchable riches of his priesthood, the sacrifice he offered, needs neither addition, nor to be repeated. He appeared to St. *John* with a golden girdle, which may denote the riches of his high-priesthood. Also, his royal riches; his princely magnificence; the riches of his glorious kingdom, and the honor of his excellent Majesty. Men are to hear from their teach-

ers, that the crucified JESUS reigneth; therefore, “let the earth rejoice, let the children of *Zion* be joyful in their King.” They must teach men, that JESUS hath his mediatorial throne exalted in the heavens; that he sitteth on his throne judging right; that as King, he guards, guides, leads, &c. with tenderness, integrity and skilfulness. As King, he gives rich variety of laws to his subjects; as King, he goes forth conquering and to conquer, proclaims war, and makes peace, casts abroad the rage of his wrath,—who, who can stand before his indignation? What earthen vessel can be able to endure his iron rod? And as in the hands of this King are eternal retributions, so men are to be taught how to honor and serve him as rightful sovereign. That the moral laws are still obligatory on the subjects of his kingdom, notwithstanding the royal grace and pardoning mercy, brought to light by the glorious gospel. Therefore, to continue in sin, that grace might abound, is to turn the grace of CHRIST into wantonness. Ministers are to shew men, (as it were with a pointing finger) that glory and honor which crown him now, who in time past was crowned with ragged thorns.—Shew them his throne, his palace royal, his near attendants the holy angels, and more distant ambassadors the angels of his churches.—Shew them, how “he breaks the jaws of the wicked, plucks the spoil from his teeth, delivers the poor who cry, help O King! the fatherless, and him who has no helper. Makes joyful the widows heart, stills the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people.” In a

word; that his loyal subjects are all, and always, in his view, and shall reign with him; but rebels shall not escape his sword, which “he beareth not in vain.” And as the mediatorial riches of CHRIST, denotes man’s poverty, so ’tis expected, that teachers fail not to remind men of their perishing poverty, by means of apostacy.—For how can men avail themselves of CHRIST’s riches, whilst unaffected with a sense of their depravity, moral defilement, enormous guilt, which cannot be removed by any thing they offer? Therefore, as bishops would be blameless, let them not fail, with all confidence, to preach man’s wretchedness, desert of indignation and wrath, and by the terrors as well as tender mercies of the LORD, beseech men, and thus compel them to be reconciled unto God, through the mediation of his dear Son.

The closing application remains:—The first part of which belongs to the Reverend ministerial part of this audience, whose respectable presence gives additional lustre to the whole.—*Reverend Sirs*, such is the nature of the present subject, as must have fixed your attention; nevertheless, the defects of its handling cannot have escaped your notice: therefore your ministerial candor will make allowances. The solemn contents of my text, are a seasonable *concio ad clerum*. To you it is given, yea, graciously given, to preach the unsearchable riches of CHRIST. This! this! your dignity, your honor, and your wealth. This! the honor that follows humility: This! the honor that warrants your emulation: This! the riches you may covet, without imputation of idolatry. May the earth, the grave and the fire be sooner

satisfied, than you cease to covet more of CHRIST'S fulness!—To you is given to know the mysteries of the gospel kingdom;—to preach more than *Moses* and the prophets, even the riches of CHRIST, as brought to light by the gospel. Your hearts burn within you, whilst your LORD opens to you the fulness of his grace and truth. The lessons in my text are not learned without labor, and the same teacher that St. *Paul* had, not *Gamaliel*, but JESUS. None teacheth like him! To preach the unsearchable riches of CHRIST, is the summary of your sacred service. You are stewards of no less than the mysteries of GOD, 1 *Cor.* iv. 1. The unsearchable riches of CHRIST are committed to your trust. How immense the treasure! But what the vessels in which 'tis lodged! Earthen vessels, feeble, fallible, mortal men! Had angels been to us in GOD'S stead, their terror might make us afraid. Marvellous the LORD'S doing: a treasure committed! a service appointed to dying men! to men compassed with infirmities, which service immortal, unspotted seraphs might rejoice to perform. But, this treasure is thus committed, that the excellency of the power might be of GOD and not of us.—Therefore let joyfulness be joined with your lowliness, otherwise the weight of the treasure may depress the earthen vessel. May you dispense the unsearchable treasure, so that many may be made rich. Thus did the apostles,—“as poor yet making many rich.” How rich in capacity are the wretched souls of many to whom you minister, for whom you watch more than watchers for the morning, that you might give a joyful account? Whilst you

are enriching others by your faithful labors, you yourselves are enriched—"He that scattereth increaseth; but "he that withholds becometh poor.—He that watereth shall be watered also himself." Whilst weeping you behold the riches of CHRIST, no more valued by some, than pearls by swine, you rejoice to find others made sensible of their value. Your character is that of lights to the world, elevated lights. Therefore, "as the beacon and the light-house serve the benighted seamen, so may you prevent the wretched wreck of souls, who are sailing on these rocky shores." Teach them, O teach them, to shun the fatal rocks on the right and left hand! Guard them from the *Scylla* and the *Charibdis* of enthusiasm and infidelity!

"Incidit in Scyllam, cupiens vitare Charibdin."

Reverend and beloved!—Think it not strange, nor take it overmuch hardly, though you taste some bitter drops, since CHRIST and his apostles had full cups of gall and wormwood. From the weakness of men, to say no worse, you are to look for more or less of dishonor, the name of deceivers, hirelings, worldlings, &c. but the apostle shews how such burdens are balanced; made supportable, viz. by your personal "purity, knowledge, long-suffering, gentleness, the HOLY GHOST, love without dissimulation, the word of truth, the armour of righteousness, on the right-hand and on the left." Let ministerial mutual affection compact you. Since we are brethren, fellow-laborers, let there be no strife among us, unless to excel in labors. The same

our master, office and work; therefore, let us abound in mutual charity! Wo to churches when their angels are at strife! Since our LORD hath fixed us in his church, may we be cautious of wandering, and excentrick motion; for if *Peter* will trim and temporize, to shun the iron weapon of the people, the steel of his brother *Paul* strikes him through. May your rich and sacred unction, be like *Aaron's* ointment and *Hermon's* dew.—May your incense be offered with fire from heaven, not with strange fire, like the two sons of *Aaron*: In a word,—bless the LORD, ye angels of the churches, ye ministers of CHRIST, who preach his unsearchable riches, anticipate the heavenly adorations; “Worthy the lamb that was slain, worthy to receive power and glory, honor and riches.”

The application turns now, to you, *dear Sir*, on the point of taking ministerial charge of the church and people in this place.—’Tis charitably hoped your mind is impressed with sentiments similar to those of the apostle in my text. ’Tis hoped you are not a stranger to humility and thankfulness, so necessary to the pastoral character, and that from acquaintance with CHRIST, you will preach his unsearchable riches. You are still to search after the riches of CHRIST, as having pleasure in them; not that by searching you can find them out unto perfection. In this painful, profitable, pleasing pursuit, you are to follow the sacred Scriptures, not make them follow you. The grand subject matter of your preaching you find in few words, *viz.* The unsearchable riches of CHRIST—His mediatory

perfection, implying his real deity and humanity, personally united, but the manner inexplicable.

—The better acquainted you are with CHRIST, the more you will commend yourself, to the conscience of men, in the sight of GOD, by manifestation of the truth. As you, yourself, would be the epistle of CHRIST, written with the Spirit of the living GOD, you must feel the solemn, the interesting imports of my text. This, this, dear Sir, will serve, to your being an able Minister of the New-Testament. This will influence you to preach, not yourself as lord, as having dominion over mens faith and conscience; but CHRIST JESUS, Lord of all;—and you will gladly spend, and be spent in the service of souls immortal, for whom CHRIST died. The keys both of doctrine and discipline, you will use for the purposes of purity and edification. Whatever tends to perfect the man of God, to furnish the minister for all good works, you will think of these things. The writings of *St. Paul* afford you singular directions, for preaching with perspicuity and connexion, with pungency, pathos and persuasive energy. There you will find sublimity of language, adapted to the sublime contents of the gospel. There you will learn, many of the best methods, to put unreasonable men to silence, to enlighten and guide men to CHRIST, and build them up in their holy faith. Manifold duties, laborious engagements, are connected with your ministerial honor; engagements that will require your chief attention, to things more interesting, than the curiosities of science, or amusing erudition. “Dying *Grotius* lamented, that he had

“ spent his life in laborious nothing.” Whilst you are giving heed to magnify your hallowed office, you will not be anxious about wordly grandeur; your true riches come not from the shrines of *Diana*, but from *JESUS*, unsearchably rich.—May the *GOD* who anciently taught *Ephraim* to go, taking him by the hand, guide you with his gracious counsel.—May that Holy Spirit, who appeared at *Pentecost*, sanctify your whole man and ministrations, that you may be unto *GOD* a sweet savour in *CHRIST*, whilst of yourself insufficient for these things. Give yourself to reading, meditation, and prayer, that your proficiency may appear, your doctrine drop, as the showers on the grass. Your pastoral character will render you like a city set on a hill; therefore you will need “ the whole armour of *GOD*, e. g. “ the shield, the sword, the breast-plate, the “ helmet, the girdle.” Being thus harnessed from heaven,” “ you will endure hardness, strive “ lawfully, fight the good fight; not as one who “ beateth the air; but keep under your body, “ finish your christian, and your ministerial “ course, keep the faith, and finally wear the “ crown of righteousness, which the righteous “ Judge shall give to all who love his appearing.”

The application is now to the Church and People in this place.

Beloved brethren.—As the solemn transactions of this day, have an affecting reference to your eternal interest, to the interest of your posterity; so 'tis charitably supposed your sentiments are serious, suitable to the occasion. In your late choice of a Pastor, now to re-

ceive his charge, we hope, that as you have not appeared precipitant, so you have acted uprightly—made choice of him to preach to you the riches, the unsearchable riches of CHRIST. The Sum of your duty as a church and people professing the glorious gospel, may be learned from my text. It is your visible honor, to have the riches of CHRIST preached among you. Therefore, it will be your happiness, if you actually receive of CHRIST's fulness; which implies your likeness to him, both in mind and manners. You reasonably expect some things of your pastor, and 'tis reasonable he should expect some of you. We would hope, that neither you nor he will be disappointed, in your respective reasonable expectations. You have professedly chosen him, to minister to you in holy things, to come unto you, in the fulness of the gospel. You have chosen him to guide you with skilful hand, feed you with sincere milk of the word, and watch for your souls. Be it, therefore, my brethren in the LORD, be it your solicitude, your lasting endeavour, to treat his person, character and administrations, according to their nature, purpose and importance. You expect he will treat you with singular affection; that he will compassionate the ignorant, and them who are out of the way; for that "he himself also, is compassed with infirmity. You expect he will be gentle among you, and that as a nurse cherisheth her children, so, he being affectionately desirous of you, will impart to you, not only the gospel, but also his own soul, because you are dear to him."—Therefore, you are to esteem

him very highly in love, submit yourselves to him, be guidable, governable and teachable. This the way to be a wise, understanding people.—Receive the truth in the love of it, and never think him your enemy, for telling you the truth. As you expect your pastor will be instant in season, and out of season; that he will reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine, so you are to give all diligent attendance.—Faithful the wounds of a friend.—The smiting of the righteous like Balm of *Gilead*—And he that hateth reproof is brutish. We hope you will endeavour, to save him the trouble of reproving, and give him the like pleasure that *St. John* had when he beheld his children walk in the truth. I pretend neither to foresee, nor foretell, the particular, or peculiar temptation you may have hereafter, to neglect your solemn engagements; but may safely recommend to you, self-jealousy and prayerful circumspection. Seriously consider, how tender, how endearing the relation of pastor and flock, the connexion demands reciprocal undissembled affection; like that of *David* and *Jonathan*. Your ecclesiastick peace, your christian tranquility depends on your behaving towards your pastor according to his character. You are alike accountable for your treatment of him, as he for his behaviour towards you. The charge he is now to receive, implies a charge to you; therefore, you are to consider yourselves as charged, before G O D, and the Lord J E S U S CHRIST, who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing, to take heed how you hear; whilst he takes heed to himself, and to his doc-

trine. As you expect him to serve you, so you are to put yourselves in the way of being served. Carefully shun whatever will give him needless interruption, weaken his hands, and discourage his heart. Rather “give him to rejoice, in being holding your order and steadfastness of your faith. By the meekness, and gentleness of CHRIST we beseech you, by the comfort of love, by the fellowship of the spirit, by bowels and mercies, by all these we beseech you to fulfil the joy of your pastor; that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord.—Let nothing be done thro’ strife or vain glory.” Time, the common boundary of things mutable, must limit your relation, as pastor and people. May this motive be powerful with you. You will not forget that *Reverend aged Father, who for many years labored among you; as he deserves a respectful remembrance, both on account of former service, and present circumstances, it is to be hoped you do, and will accordingly remember him. May this church, by sacred joints and bands, have nourishment ministered, knit together, increase with the increase of God, grow unto an holy temple in the LORD, and finally presented a glorious church.—Finally brethren, whatever things are honorable, equitable, amiable, reputable, think on them, and do them, with your might.—And may your souls have cause to bless him, who is to come to you, in the name of the LORD.

If the time be not too far spent, I would offer a word to this large assembly, whose reverential attention,

attention, and decent deportment, deserve a remark of commendation.

The unsearchable riches of CHRIST are offered to you, they are indiscriminately offered. The spirit and the bride say come, and let him that heareth say come, and let him that is poor and needy come, and whosoever will, let him take of the riches of CHRIST freely—Let it not suffice, to have heard of his riches; be persuaded to accept them, *i. e.* be altogether christians. This, and nothing less, will secure that fulness of glory, of which you are capable. The gospel comes not to deprive you of any valuable enjoyments; but, on the contrary, to make you heirs of GOD, and joint heirs with the son of GOD. Indeed some things must be parted with, or you cannot be christians; but these are things, which, if retained, will drown you in destruction. The gains of godliness, are in the scriptural language, no less than, “all things are yours, whether *Paul*, or “*Apollos*, or *Cephas*, or the world, or life, or “death, or things present, or to come, all are “yours.” The riches of this world shall vanish as vapours; but the riches of real religion endure for ever. Therefore, if uncertain riches entice you to the neglect of eternal treasures, consent not, lest poverty “come upon you as an armed man. “Because there is wrath, beware, lest ye be “taken away with a stroke, then a great ransom cannot deliver you. Will GOD esteem your “riches? no, not gold.—Riches profit not in the “day of wrath, but the righteousness of saints “delivereth from death.” 20 JY 64